

**DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS VOLUNTARY SERVICE  
NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (SOP)**

**Preface**

The National Advisory Committee (NAC) of the Department of Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service (VAVS) was established by VA Circular No. 117, May 17, 1947, and became a federally chartered advisory committee on February 5, 1975.

The Committee advises the Under Secretary for Health on matters pertaining to the participation of volunteers in VA medical facilities, assists in recruitment and orientation of volunteers, and keeps the officers and members of participating organizations informed of volunteer needs and accomplishments.

All recommendations approved by the NAC at its Annual Meeting are responded to in writing by the Under Secretary for Health. A majority vote of the NAC Service Member Organizations constitutes the recommendations of the Committee. A member may file a minority report of the Committee's recommendations.

The NAC Executive Committee monitors and performs oversight of the NAC membership policies and procedures. Voluntary Service Office is responsible for implementation, reporting, recruitment and membership application processing.

The National Advisory Committee has two (2) categories of membership:

a. Service Member organizations are those which maintain the provision of volunteers and participation on local VAVS facility committees at a minimum of thirty (30) VA facilities. Service member organizations shall be the only category of NAC members having voting rights. Participation on a local VAVS facility committee is defined as having VA recognized representation on that committee. This definition relies upon the policy that any organization whose VA recognized representation misses three (3) consecutive local VAVS facility committee meetings will cause its removal from the committee.

b. Donor Member organizations are those which donate significant funds or materials to assist or benefit veterans at/to a minimum of thirty (30) VA facilities. Donor Members are expected to maintain such support at or above the thirty (30) VA facility minimum level.

There are two (2) separate subdivisions of VAVS member categories -- Associate Service Member and Associate Donor Member. The minimum number of VA facilities served will be fifteen (15) for both these Associate Member subdivisions. Associate Service members must also participate on a minimum of fifteen (15) local VAVS facility committees. Associate Members must continue their activity at or above the qualifying level in order to remain on the NAC.

## **NAC PREFACE (Cont.)**

The NAC has an additional non-voting membership category known as Honorary Member. The purpose of this membership category is to recognize past VAVS NAC service of those NAC member organizations no longer able to meet current minimum criteria for active membership. NAC member organizations with at least ten (10) consecutive years of NAC membership are eligible to apply for Honorary Membership. NAC Honorary Member organizations may later apply for any other NAC Membership category within criteria current at the time of application.

Each member organization may appoint one National Representative and up to eight Deputy Representatives. The Chairperson is the Chief Communications Officer, Veterans Health Administration, Central Office, Washington, DC. The Director, Voluntary Service Office, will be the Deputy Chairperson.

The National Advisory Committee (NAC) holds one meeting a year, attended by members at their own organization's expense. The Executive Committee meets one time a year other than at the Annual Meeting. NAC and Executive Committee meetings are open to the public. Notice of the purpose, date, time and location of each annual meeting is published in advance in the Federal Register.

As described in a 1992 NAC adopted motion, if a NAC member organization (other than Honorary) does not have VA recognized representation at three (3) consecutive Annual Meetings, that NAC organization will be removed from NAC membership and then is eligible to apply for membership under the criteria existing at the time of application.

All NAC meetings will be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised.

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE CHARTER  
FOR  
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS  
VOLUNTARY SERVICE NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

A. Committee's Official Designation:

Department of Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service (VAVS) National Advisory Committee.

B. Objectives and Scope of Committee:

The VAVS National Advisory Committee advises the Under Secretary for Health and other members of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Central Office staff on how to coordinate and promote volunteer activities within VA health care facilities and matters relating to volunteerism.

With the exception of the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson, all members of the Committee are named by the national organizations represented. These Committee members are entitled either VAVS National Representative or VAVS Deputy National Representative.

Organizational membership on the committee includes four categories: Service (voting); Associate Service; Donor; and Associate Donor.

C. Period of Time Necessary for Committee to Carry Out Its Purpose:

Because the need for voluntary services is ongoing, this committee will be needed for the foreseeable future.

D. Agency Officials to Whom the Committee Reports:

The Committee reports to the Under Secretary for Health.

E. Agency Responsibility for Support of the Committee:

Veterans Health Administration, through the offices of the Chief Communications Officer and the Voluntary Service Office.

F. Duties for Which Committee is Responsible:

The Committee serves in an advisory capacity by making recommendations to the Under Secretary for Health for the improvement of voluntary services to veteran-patients by means of coordination on a national level of the established plans and policies for community volunteer participation.

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE CHARTER (Cont.)**

G. Estimated Annual Operating Costs in Dollars and Man Years:

VA financial support for the work of the Committee is estimated at \$106,500 per year, which includes two staff years.

H. Estimated Number and Frequency of Committee Meetings:

Committee meetings are held annually and the Executive Committee holds a separate annual meeting. Subcommittees meet on an as needed basis.

I. Committee's Termination Date:

None

J. Date Charter Is Filed:

April 4, 2001

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
OF THE  
VAVS NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

The Executive Committee of the VAVS National Advisory Committee (NAC) shall be a working group selected from among Service Member organizations of the VAVS National Advisory Committee.

The Executive Committee shall make recommendations to the VAVS National Advisory Committee in all areas of VAVS National Advisory Committee business and activities. The Executive Committee is designated as the governing body between annual meetings of the National Advisory Committee and is entrusted with the responsibility of fulfilling the National Advisory Committee charter. It also shall be available to the Director, Voluntary Service Office, for discussion, consultation, planning and coordination of VAVS National Advisory Committee programs and activities.

The Executive Committee is charged with the Annual Meeting Site Selection. Voluntary Service Office presents to the Executive Committee those site nominations to be considered, with the concurrence of the local Voluntary Service Chief and the Medical Center Director. Upon selection by the Executive Committee, Voluntary Service Office will then negotiate the hotel contract in the approved city for the Annual VAVS NAC Meeting.

The Committee shall be composed of not more than twenty (20) members: Committee Officers will be a Chairperson and a Vice-Chairperson appointed for two-year terms (effective immediately following the annual meeting of odd numbers years) by the Chairperson of the National Advisory Committee. VAVS National Advisory Committee Service Member organizations shall not serve consecutive terms in the position of either Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson of the Executive Committee.

All Service Member Organizations of the VAVS National Advisory Committee represented on one hundred and fifty (150) or more local VAVS facility committees shall be represented on the Executive Committee. Service Member organizations represented on less than one hundred and fifty (150) but at least thirty (30) or more local VAVS facility committees shall compose the balance of the Executive Committee and will be selected by the Chairperson of the National Advisory Committee for a two (2) year term. All qualifying Service Member organizations will be given fair consideration.

## **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (Cont.)**

The Chairperson shall: preside at all meetings of the Executive Committee; assist the VAVS National Advisory Committee Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson as requested in conducting the meetings of the VAVS National Advisory Committee; appoint members of the Executive Committee to serve as Chairperson of the Recommendations, and other Subcommittees of the Executive Committee as deemed necessary; and shall serve as ex-officio member of all Subcommittees. Subcommittee members will be appointed by the respective Subcommittee Chairperson from Service Member organizations participating in thirty (30) or more local VAVS facility committees. All Subcommittees shall have mission statements approved by the Executive Committee. All Subcommittees shall report to the Executive Committee.

Membership on the Executive Committee will be contingent upon the member organization's support and concurrence.

The Chairperson of the National Advisory Committee, and the Director, Voluntary Service Office will be ex-officio members of the Executive Committee and its Subcommittees.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

### **Mission Statement**

The Recommendations Subcommittee shall be a working group reporting to the Executive Committee and at other times as required by the Chairperson of the Executive Committee. The Recommendations Subcommittee is responsible to the VAVS National Advisory Committee for obtaining Recommendations for improvements in the VAVS programs on the National level.

The Recommendations Subcommittee shall consist of three (3) members one of whom shall have recent experience on the Subcommittee to provide knowledge and continuity of the process. The Chairperson of the Executive Committee shall appoint the Subcommittee Chairperson, who shall be a National Representative or Deputy Representative from a NAC Service Member organization. The Subcommittee Chairperson's term of office will be for one year, from Annual Meeting to Annual Meeting, and may serve consecutive terms.

The Chairperson of the Recommendations Subcommittee shall appoint two (2) members to serve on this Subcommittee. Members will begin service at the end of the Annual Meeting at which they are appointed.

### **Standard Operating Procedures**

#### **Responsibilities:**

The Subcommittee is responsible to notify all the National VAVS Representatives by letter on VAVS letterhead immediately after the Annual Meeting that recommendations for the next VAVS National Advisory Committee Annual Meeting are due with a deadline date set for August 31. Letters will include submission instructions. Format is to be in a narrative style. Corrections will be made for grammar and punctuation in order to present a professional product. Recommendations for changes should include any and all references to source documents and should be submitted to VA Voluntary Service Office on the national letterhead of the sponsoring organization. Voluntary Service Office will then forward the submissions to the Subcommittee and arrange a conference call for its review and action on the recommendations (for EC approval/disapproval).

#### **Reporting:**

The Subcommittee will review each recommendation in August and September and then present same to the Executive Committee at the Fall meeting, who will act on all recommendations (for NAC approval or disapproval). The Subcommittee will then take the recommendations, with Executive Committee's recommendations, and prepare them for submission at the Annual VAVS National Advisory Committee Meeting.

## **SELECTION SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FOR OUTSTANDING NAC VAVS VO LUNTEER (MALE AND FEMALE)**

### **Mission Statement**

The Outstanding NAC VAVS Volunteer (Male and Female) Selection Subcommittee shall be a working group reporting to the Executive Committee (EC). It is responsible to the VAVS National Advisory Committee (NAC) for obtaining the appropriate nominations for volunteer recognition on the national level.

The Selection Subcommittee shall consist of three (3) members: Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and Immediate Past Chairperson of the Executive Committee, and one staff person, Voluntary Service Office.

### **Standard Operative Procedures**

#### **Responsibilities:**

Each fall, the Executive Committee Chairperson shall notify all National VAVS Representatives by letter, on VAVS letterhead, that nominations for the next VAVS National Advisory Committee Annual Meeting are due with a deadline of February 28. The format for submissions is to be letter style, between 300-500 words. Letters of support from local VA facilities are allowed to accompany each submission. All local nominations must be submitted to the affiliated volunteer's National VAVS Representative who will select the organization's candidate to be forwarded to Voluntary Service Office on the national letterhead of the nominating organization. Voluntary Service Office shall distribute the nominations to the Subcommittee by March 15, then arrange a conference call for the Subcommittee to review the submissions. Awards for winners shall be ordered by Voluntary Service Office.

#### **Reporting:**

The Subcommittee shall review each nomination in March. Following selection of the male and female award recipients, the Executive Committee Chairperson shall immediately notify the sponsoring organization of each, followed by notification in writing to each NAC member organization. The awards shall be presented at the Annual VAVS National Advisory Committee Meeting.



### **Mission Statement**

The Recruitment Subcommittee shall be a working group reporting to the Executive Committee (EC). It is responsible to the VAVS National Advisory Committee (NAC) for providing recruitment strategies for the NAC member organizations.

The Recruitment Subcommittee shall consist of a maximum of four (4) members. The Chairperson of the Executive shall appoint the Subcommittee Chairperson, who shall be a National Representative or Deputy Representative from a NAC Service Member organization. The Subcommittee Chairperson's term of office will be for one year, from Fall EC Meeting to Fall EC Meeting, and may serve consecutive terms.

The Chairperson of the Recruitment Subcommittee shall appoint the additional members to serve on this Subcommittee. Members will begin service at the end of the Fall EC Meeting at which they are appointed.

### **Standard Operating Procedures**

#### **Responsibilities:**

The Subcommittee is responsible for researching and submitting volunteer recruitment strategies that can be adapted by large or small organizations. These strategies should reposition VAVS as a dynamic, community-based organization that people want to join and support; increase the number of people who volunteer their time and energy for VAVS; and, increase the racial, ethnic, lifestyle and age diversity among VAVS volunteers.

#### **Reporting:**

The Subcommittee will present a report at Executive Committee meetings; and, to the NAC at the Annual VAVS National Advisory Committee Meeting.